BS
580
.S2N4

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. ..... Copyright No. .....

Shelf BS580
.S2N4

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

# SAMUEL IN THE TEMPLE.

FRONTISPIECE.

Deposited March 23. 1840

# SAMUEL

IN

# THE TEMPLE.

Newcomb, Harvey

Written for the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, and revised by the Committee of Publication.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
1871
CITY OF WASHINGTON

BOSTON:
MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY,
Depository No. 13 Cornhill.
1840.

Deposited March 23. 1840
Recorded Vol. 16. Page 64

BS580
.S2N4

7-2-34

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1840,
By CHRISTOPHER C. DEAN,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

4214

# SAMUEL IN THE TEMPLE.

I SHOULD hope that every member of a Sabbath school knew all about the story of little Samuel, whose history is in the Bible. Yet I fear such is not the case; and therefore propose to call attention to it in these few pages.

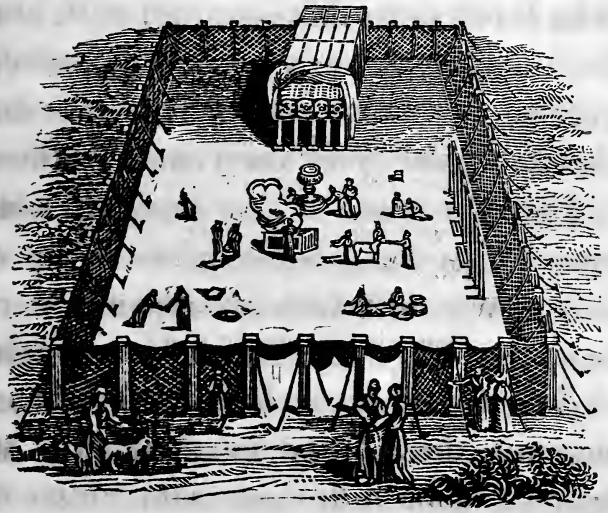
He was the first-born, and his mother, whose name was Hannah, loved him very much. She had prayed for a great while, that God would give her that little boy; and when he was born, she knew that God had heard her prayer, and she was very grateful. As the best proof, also, of her gratitude,

she immediately lent him back to the Lord, devoting him wholly to the service of her kind Benefactor. As well as she loved him, she was willing, while he was yet young,—probably not more than three years old,—to part with him, with the prospect of seeing him once a year only, when she went up to worship the Lord, and offer the yearly sacrifice.

Perhaps some of my young friends may think that Hannah went up on this yearly visit, to worship, as it were, her son; but this was not the case with that good woman. It is to be feared that many a mother to whom God has lent an only son, has been guilty of such sin,—has paid a higher homage and given a stronger love to her child, than to her Maker,—and, instead of lending her dear one to the Lord, as Hannah did, has held him back from the Lord's service, and seemed to con-

sider him as her own. But God will deal with such parents.

In the time of Samuel, the Jews had but one place of worship, and that was at the Tabernacle in Shiloh. There



God had placed his name; and thither he had commanded all the men to go up three times every year, to worship before the Lord. Once a year, also, all their families went up with them, and presented their common offering;

when the high priest went into the Holy of Holies, and, after offering a sacrifice for his own sins, offered also a sacrifice for the sins of the whole nation.

Dr. Watts has a very beautiful psalm, which refers to this custom :

"The Lord in Zion placed his name,
His ark was settled there;
To Zion the whole nation came,
To worship, thrice a year.

But we have no such lengths to go,
Nor wander far abroad;
Where'er thy saints assemble now,
There is a house for God."

You would do well, dear children, to commit these lines to memory; and every Sabbath-day, as you enter the sanctuary, you should recollect and consider that you are entering "the house of God." Then, I trust, your deportment will be such that all around you will see that you realize the presence of God, and fear to sin before him.

Hannah had gone to that place many times before Samuel was born; but, no doubt, after she had lent her little son to the Lord, and placed him under the care of Eli, in the temple, she went up with more joy, and higher gratitude, to worship that good Being who had answered her prayer, than ever she did before.

Some might think she acted foolishly, perhaps they would say unfeelingly, to put away a lovely child so far from her. But Hannah loved God, and she was determined to bring a rich offering to him. So she brought her only son; for she had said, "I will lend him to the Lord, as long as he liveth, and he shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

Samuel was so very young, I do not know that he understood the reasons why his mother should leave him in the

temple with the aged Eli, the high priest; but it seems that he was very obedient, and I cannot find that he ever asked to go back, or felt unwilling to remain where his parents had placed him.

There is something very beautiful in obedience to parents; and I have always noticed that an obedient child, if he lives to grow up, will almost certainly become a good man, and receive the blessing of God. There is more meaning, I have thought, in the fifth commandment, than children generally imagine. Think of it, dear children. The commandments are words which the great God himself spoke. These very words he himself spake on Mount Sinai, "*Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*" This, moreover,

was addressed to children. And it is as if spoken to every child who may read this book; it was spoken to *you*, dear reader! Do you then obey this command?

I knew a little girl, once, who would sometimes be very disobedient to her parents, but at other times would be very willing to do as they required. I remember, too, that at such times this fifth commandment used to trouble her very much; and once she got a pair of scissors and cut it out of her primer, because she knew she should have to repeat her catechism to her mother on Sabbath evening, and conscience told her that she had, through the week, broken that command. But this little girl did not realize that what God has once spoken will always remain; and that God does not forget what he has commanded, though children may refuse to obey.

As little Samuel was lent to the Lord, he, of course, was under the particular care and guidance of his almighty Friend; and even when he was sleeping in the still night, and all was silent and quiet around him, then God was near—*very near*—so that he had his eye on that little sleeping boy! My young friends, do you ever think how near God is to *you*, also?

When you lie down on your beds at night, do you ever think that God will watch over you in your sleeping hours? and when you awake in the morning, do you realize your obligations to him, who has protected you from harm, from

sickness, and from death? Why, if God should forget you, for one moment, your pulse would cease to beat, your heart would be still, and you would become a cold and lifeless corpse, to be laid away in the lonely, silent grave.

How careful, then, should you be, that you do not forget God—do not forget to pray to him morning and evening, asking for his protection, thanking him for all your mercies, and desiring to "lend" yourselves to him, that you may be his, and he may be your Friend, for ever!

God was so near to Samuel that he

spake to him, and called him by name, "Samuel, Samuel." He even awoke him, and talked with him, and told him what to tell Eli. How would you feel, dear young friends, if God should speak to you this night, and call you by name, and talk with you?

Well, he does speak to you, though it may not be with an audible voice. He has spoken to you a great many times,—he is always speaking to you. He speaks to you in the Bible, which, you know, is called "the Word of God." And now I will tell you just what he says, and I should like to have you commit his words to memory, and repeat them over to yourself many times a day. I know that some children do not love to commit the Bible to memory; but it is a great and a good thing to have the mind well stored with the words of the great God. The

Scripture, thus stored up in the memory, is a treasure which can never be taken from you. I will tell you what a benefit it has been to a poor blind lady, with whom I am acquainted. When this lady was a little girl, she was very fond of committing whole chapters to memory, and also very many hymns. After she grew up, she lost her eye-sight, and was entirely blind. Her sister, who was older than herself, went to take care of her, and, after a little while, this sister's eyes became affected, and she also became blind. So there they lived together, both in darkness; and it was often the case that they could not go out on the Sabbath. At such seasons, the lady whom I first mentioned would pass many hours in repeating over to her sister the chapters and hymns she had learned when she was a little girl; then

they would sing their hymns, and pray, and so, though only two in number, they realized the fulfilment of the Saviour's declaration that he would be with them when only two or three of his disciples were together, and they would have a very good meeting. This lady has often said to me, "O, if there is one blessing which I value more than all others, it is the word of God stored

up in my memory. How emphatically in my case it is a '*light in darkness!*' "

But I promised to tell you what God has said to *you*. He says (Prov. 2: 1—5), "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures,—then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

And again (Prov. 30: 17):—"The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

(Eccl. 12: 1.) "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the

years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

(Eph. 6: 1—3.) "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

(Col. 3: 20.) "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

These, dear children, are some of the words which God has spoken to *you;* and if you will be obedient, and listen as Samuel did, and as God tells you you should, it will be well with you—you will be happy in life, and you will die happy, and go to dwell with the blessed Saviour for ever.

There was something very striking in the prompt obedience of Samuel, to

do at once what God commanded him. It was a very painful duty which he was called to perform. Eli had been very kind to Samuel, and, no doubt, Samuel loved him very much; and when he was told to go and tell Eli that God was angry with his two sons, because they were so wicked, and that he meant to destroy them, it must have been a very painful and very unwelcome duty to him; but we do not read that he refused or delayed to do it, though it is said "that he feared to tell him;" that is, he feared it would greatly affect Eli; but he told him every whit, and kept back nothing.

I want to say a word about these sons of Eli, for you know that they were the children of a good man. They had been brought up in the service of the temple, and had had the same privileges Samuel enjoyed; but

they did not love and fear God. Therefore they proved disobedient to their father, and, without doubt, mocked or slighted his words. Then it was, also, that God was angry with them, and left them; so that soon after they were slain in battle. And, as their dead bodies might be left unburied, very likely the ravens and eagles—for they often flock around a dead carcass—did in fact feed on them, and pick out their eyes; and so the words of God were verified in their awful end.

Now, dear children, in the words which are addressed to you from the Bible, you are commanded to be as prompt and as ready to perform every lawful and proper command of your parents or teachers and guardians, as Samuel was the commands of Eli. And remember God's messages to you are not painful—not hard to perform;

and if you will only obey them, you will both glorify and honor him, and be happy yourself, which you can be in no other way.

And suppose, when Samuel had heard what God had said to him, he should, when he got up in the morning, have forgotten all about it, or have said that he could not attend to it then, or have resolved that he would have nothing to do with it; would he have honored God? or would God have loved him, or blessed him, or have been his Friend? Dear children, think of this, and then go and pray that you, too, may have a heart willing to obey God, and such a heart, if you sincerely repent and believe in Christ, will be yours, and the God of Samuel will be your God also.

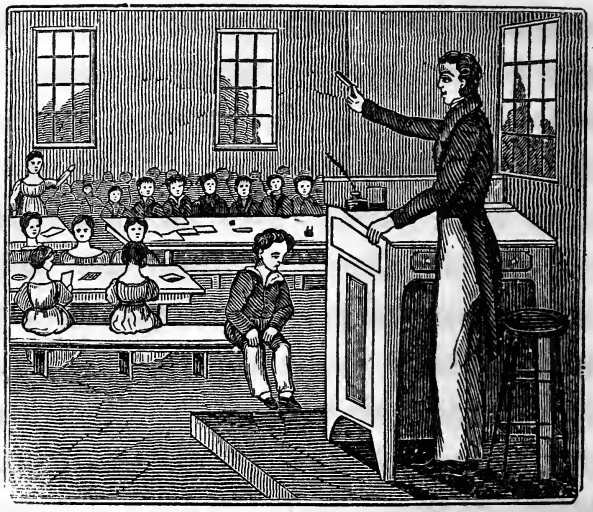
Perhaps some of you may think that, as you have not been lent to the Lord,

as Samuel was, you are not required to devote yourselves to him while you are young. But let me ask you, "Have you not been baptized?" No doubt many of you have been; and you are ready to answer at once, "We have been baptized." Perhaps some of you can remember the very day when your parents carried you to the sanctuary,

and there, before the whole congregation, dedicated you in humble faith to

God, and you were baptized, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. O, that was a solemn moment! *Then* your parents lent you to the Lord; then you were dedicated to his service; so that from that hour it has been specially your duty to love and obey him.

How then, has it been with you? Have you never been wicked since? Have you never told a lie? Have you never disobeyed your parents? Have you never forgotten the Sabbath-day? Have you never neglected prayer? Have you never been inattentive at the Sabbath school? Have you never spoken wicked words, or taken the name of God in vain? Have you never been angry and quarrelsome? Have you never forgotten that the eye of God is ever upon you? What answer does conscience give to these questions?



I was once present, when a little boy was expelled from the Sabbath school. His parents had lent him to the Lord; but, as he grew to be a lad, he became very wicked, and would often speak wicked words, and tell falsehoods. He was also very disobedient to his parents; and when the Sabbath came, instead of going to church, he would go away and play during the hours of service, and then

come home and make his kind mother, who was sick, think that he had attended meeting. I thought that I would keep an eye on that boy; for I feared that, as he had chosen to forget God, so God would forsake him. And how do you think the case has proved? Now that very boy is in jail for stealing, and it is thought that he will have to be sent to the state prison, to stay several years.

Now only think of the difference between that boy and Samuel. Samuel was lent to the Lord by a praying mother, and so was the little boy I have mentioned. But, as you read the life of Samuel, you will find that he always feared and obeyed God, and when he grew up to be a man, every body who saw him knew that he was a good man, and honored him; and when he died, no doubt, he went im-

mediately to heaven; and there he still lives, rejoicing in the presence of God. So if you ever go to heaven, you will see him, and converse with him, and perhaps hear him tell how much he loved God when he was a little boy, in the temple; and you may hear him tune his golden harp, and sing praises to that almighty Friend to whom he was so early dedicated. And there, too, will be Hannah, rejoicing that she was privileged to present so rich an offering as her first-born son to the service of the Most High God.

But will that other little boy be there? O, I do not know. He *may* repent; he *may* be sorry for his sins, and find pardon of God; but I hardly ever heard of a boy or girl who began early to be disobedient to their kind parents, to speak wicked words, to lie, and steal, and to trifle with all God's

commands, who ever did much better as they grew up. I have almost always found that, when such a course of conduct has brought them to a jail, or to the state prison, they have, if they have been set at liberty, gone on, adding sin to sin, until God, in his justice, has cut them down. Then they die, and, if they are not penitent, you know they cannot go to heaven.

Now, dear young reader, which course will you pursue? Have you been lent to the Lord? Then be determined that you will love him, and serve him; that you will take the word of God for your guide, and as you read it, if you do not always understand what it means, go and ask your heavenly Father to teach you. He listens to the prayers of little children. He is always near you, and, if you truly seek it, he will help you to understand his will, and to perform all your duty.

No child that has the privileges which Sabbath school children now

enjoy, can make any reasonable excuse for not becoming a Christian, or for not storing his mind with the word of God, and hiding the commandments in his heart; and if he does not improve his rich mercies, how will he answer for it when he shall stand at the judgment-seat of Christ? But if you do neglect your Bible and your soul, and make light of all your privileges, still there are some who will love the Saviour, and study the Bible; and it will prove a "light to their feet, and a lamp to their path;" it will guide them

onward and upward—it will conduct them to heaven—it will make them eternally blessed.

I once knew a little girl, about nine years of age, who loved her Bible very much. She lived in a very remote and obscure situation, a great way off from Sabbath schools, and the place of religious meetings. She had, too, but little access to such books as children belonging to our Sabbath schools usually have. She had never heard but two sermons preached, in her life, and she had no idea at all of a church.

She had only been taught to read a little, by a lady who had kept a school in the place where she lived, for a few months, and under whose instruction she had endeavored to improve.

After this lady went away, poor Mary (for that was her name) mourned very much that there was no one to

teach her any more, and especially that she had no one to instruct her from the Bible, to answer the many questions she wished to ask, and to furnish her with a hymn book, from which she might learn hymns to sing—for her family were too poor to purchase a hymn book, and none had then been given to them. Some time afterward, another lady went into that place, and was employed in teaching the children in that vicinity. Mary was among her pupils, and soon gave evidence, unconsciously, of true piety.

This lady, on seeing Mary's great attachment to the Bible, and her pecu-

liar interest in the book of Acts, requested her to commit that book to memory, promising to reward her for it. On being asked what reward she would choose, instead of asking for toys, money, or clothing, she modestly requested the loan of her teacher's hymn book once a week, that she might store her mind with as many hymns as she could, before her teacher should leave the place, and carry away the precious book! This request, of course, was readily granted. And a hymn book was promised to her, so soon as she should have learned the book of Scripture assigned her.

Mary commenced her task cheerfully. And every afternoon she might be seen tarrying after school, to repeat what she had learned through the day.

The family to which Mary belonged were in such needy circumstances that even for wood they were accustomed

to depend principally on what they could gather from time to time, and bring home by hand. This will explain Mary's allusion in what I am about to state.

On being asked how she found time to study so much Scripture, besides her usual school studies, when the days began to grow very short, she replied that before going into the woods in the morning to gather chips, she usually read attentively a few verses, and while filling her basket repeated them over and over; and so, by the time she was ready to go home, she had her verses all perfect. After going to bed at night, also, she would request her mother to read a few more verses to her by firelight (for candles or lamps were a convenience their poverty did not allow them often to enjoy), that she might repeat them over to herself until she fell asleep.

This course was not the excitement of a day, or week, then to be dropped, as is often the case with many little girls whom I know, but was her constant habit for weeks and months.

After eighteen weeks' study in this way, she came, one Saturday afternoon,

to her teacher, requesting that she might recite her entire lesson; and now, with great propriety, and much evident solemnity, she repeated the whole twenty-eight chapters of the book of Acts.

But Mary did not rest here. Having a brother and sister, both younger than

herself, she felt very desirous that they also might love the Bible, and store their youthful minds with its sacred truths. Often has her teacher listened, and heard her repeating over to them her verses, and endeavoring, in her simple manner, to explain them; and on being once asked if she ever prayed with them, she replied, "O, yes; when mother sends us into the woods to play, and Samuel will be still, then I pray."

As her parents were very poor, and had but one room in a little log hut, Mary had, in the winter, no place of retirement. But she did not give over her devotions; as her teacher learnt, "when the room was dark, and the fire had gone out, *then* she lifted up her prayer to God." And, no doubt, he who sitteth in the heavens heard her petitions. Such was this little girl.

And now, dear children, what will you do? Will you lay aside this little

book, as relating to a subject in which you have no interest? Will you neglect your Bible, and forget the commands of God, thinking that there will be time enough yet? or will you go immediately, and tell your Heavenly Father that you will give him your heart, and love and serve him as little Samuel did, in the temple, and as little Mary did, in her humble log cabin? I may never know, in this world, what you will now do, but God will know, Jesus Christ will know, the Holy Spirit will know, and all the angels in heaven will know; and at the judgment-day, all the world will be assembled, and then it will be seen and known whether you are standing at the right hand of the Judge. If you are not found *there*, it will be because you would not obey the word of God; and to such as do not obey his word, he will say, "Depart ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

When little Samuel woke,
And heard his Maker's voice,
At every word he spoke
How much did he rejoice;
O, blessed, happy child, to find
The God of heaven so near and kind.

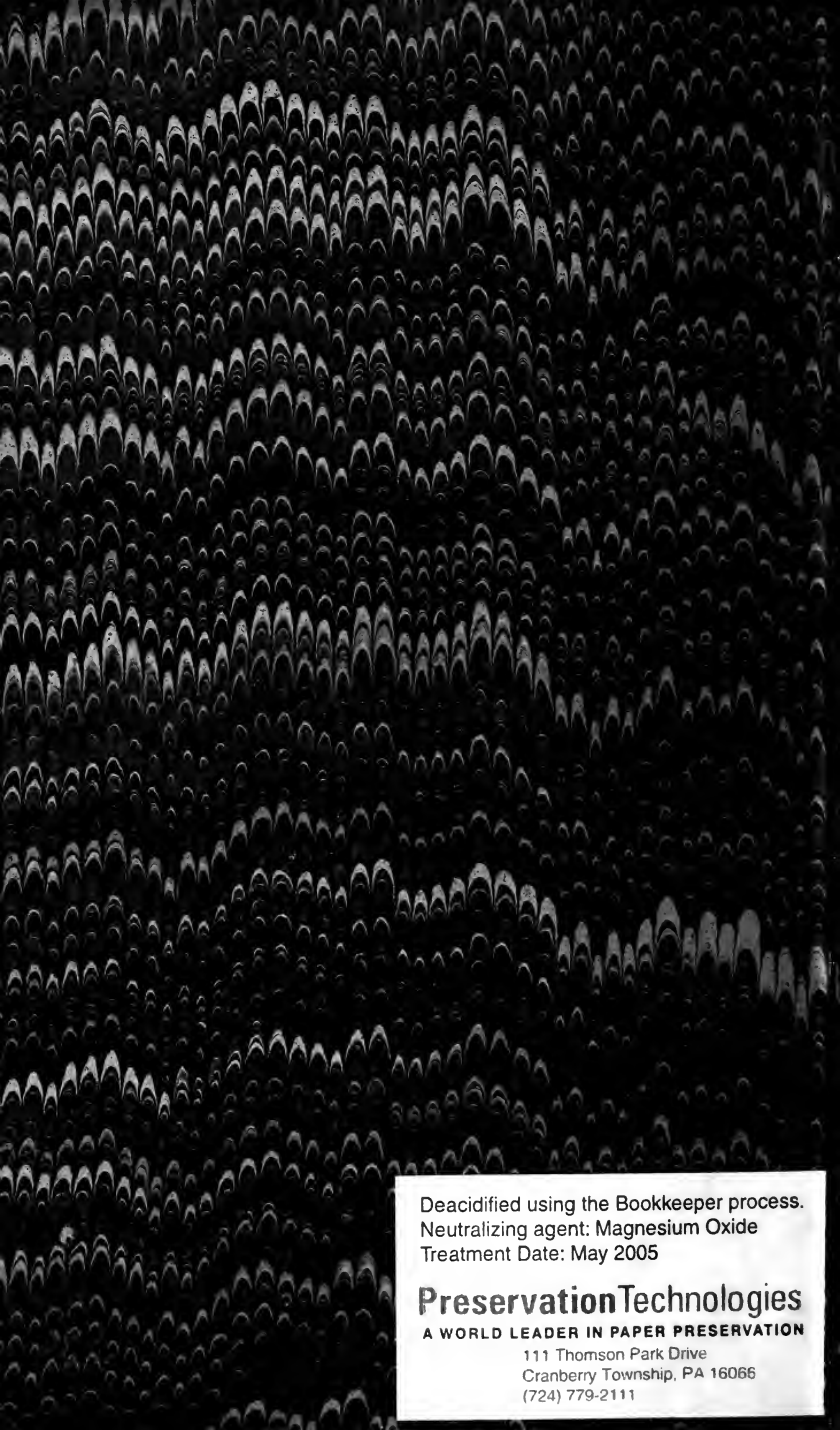
If God would speak to me,
And say he was my friend,
How happy should I be,
O, how would I attend!
The smallest sin I then should fear,
If God Almighty was so near.

And does he never speak?
O yes; for in his word
He bids me come and seek
The God that Samuel heard,
In almost every page I see
The God of Samuel calls to me.

And I beneath his care
May safely rest my head;
I know that God is there,
To guard my humble bed;
And every sin I well may fear,
Since God Almighty is so near.

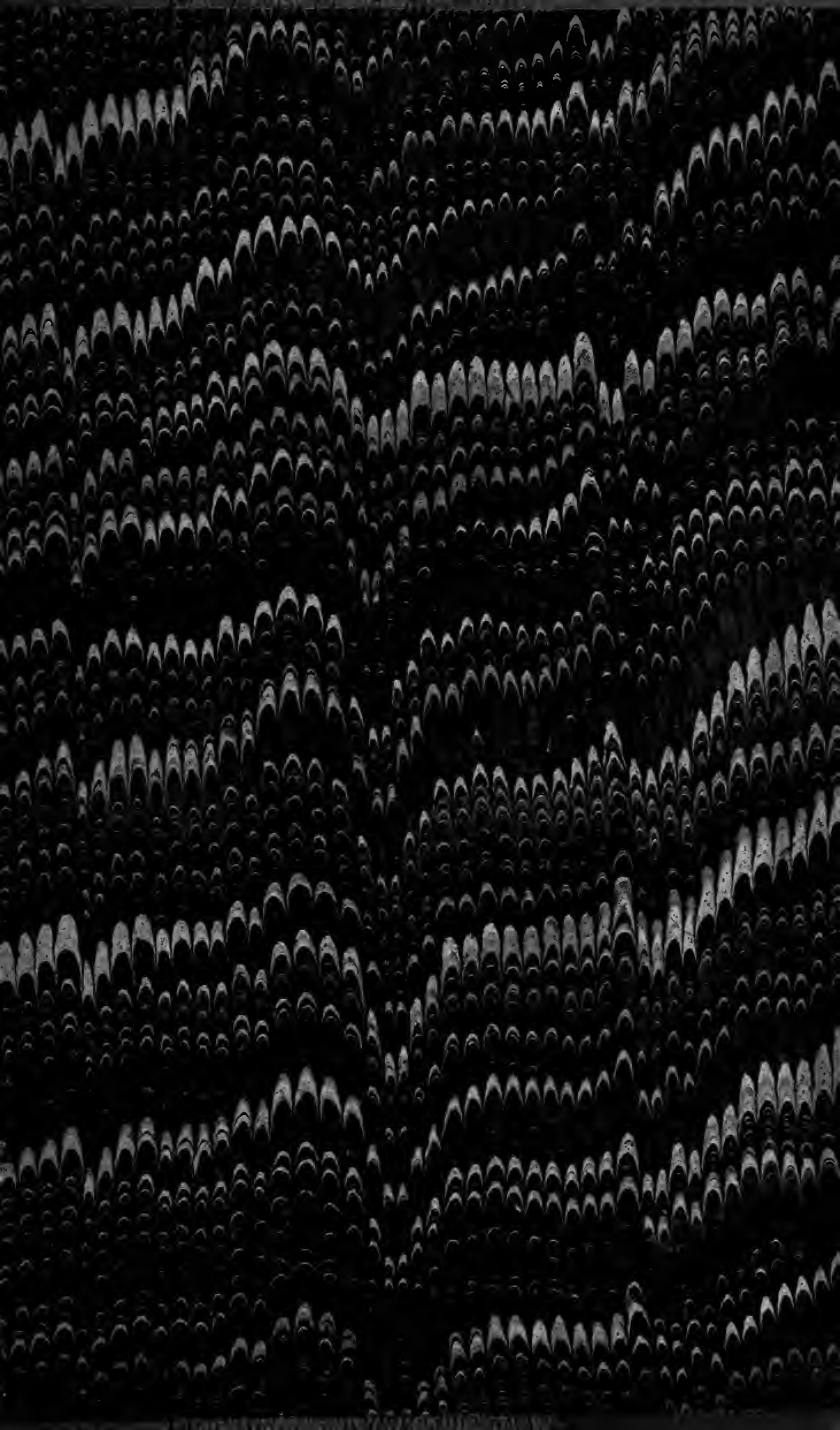
Like Samuel, let me say,
Whene'er I read his word,
Speak, Lord; I would obey
The voice which Samuel heard;
And when I in thy house appear,
Speak, for thy servant waits to hear.

BS
1927
580
S25



Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: May 2005

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 014 327 994 7